

that of Copiapó, where there is no fresh water, and where, with the exception of some small rodents, (the constant inhabitants of sterile regions) scarcely any other animal could exist. I saw also very many of these foxes wandering about by day (although Azara says they are nocturnal in Paraguay) on the plains of Santa Cruz, where various kinds of mice are abundant, and likewise around the Sierra Ventana. In the course of one day's ride in this latter neighbourhood, (not far from Bahia Blanca, lat. 39° S.) I should think I saw between thirty and forty. They generally were wandering at no great distance from their burrows; but, as they are not very swift animals, our dogs caught two. Azara states that in Paraguay this fox, which he calls the Agourá-chay, inhabits thick woods, and that it makes a great nest or pile of straw, to lie on; but that near Buenos Ayres it uses the holes of the Bizcacha. Further southward, where the Bizcacha is not found, it certainly excavates its own burrow.\* In Chile these foxes are very destructive to the vineyards, from the quantity of grapes they consume; so that boys are generally kept in the vintage season with bells and other means to frighten them away. Azara states, that in Paraguay they likewise eat fruit and sugarcane. By the same authority it is said, that the Agourá-chay, when taken young, is easily domesticated.—D.

## 1. FELIS YAGOUAROUNDI.

## PLATE VIII.

Felis Yagouarundi, *Desmarest*, Mammologie, p. 230.

Yagouarundi, *Azara*, Essais sur l'histoire Naturelle des Quadrupèdes de la Province du Paraguay, tom. i. p. 171.

Felis Darwinii, *Martin*, Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, 1837, p. 3.

*F. vellere brevi, adpresso, purpurascens-fusco; pilis flavescens annulatis; pedibus nigro lavatis; cauda longissima; auribus parvulis.*

**DESCRIPTION.**—The fur is rather harsh, short, and somewhat adpressed: the under fur is of a pale grayish brown colour; the hairs which constitute the chief clothing of the animal, are black, annulated with brownish yellow, or in some parts, yellow-white, each hair having about three or four rings. The black and pale colours are about equal in proportion, and their mixture pro-

\* Considering the great difference of climate and other conditions between the hot and wooded country of Paraguay, and the desolate plains of Patagonia, one is led to suspect that the *Canis Azarae* of La Plata and Patagonia, which wanders about by day, and inhabits burrows instead of heaps of straw, may turn out to be a different species from the Agourá-chay of Azara, which is nocturnal in its habits, and lives in thick coverts.

duces a deep brown tint, which is almost uniform throughout the body and limbs. On the head the yellowish colour predominates over the black, excepting on the tip of the muzzle, and thence back to the eye, where the hairs are of a brownish black colour. On the throat the hairs are brown. The underside of the tarsus is black, and on the outer side of the fore-foot there is a black mark which extends upwards on to the wrist. The tail is long and bushy; towards and on the base, the hairs are annulated with black and yellow, like those of the body; but beyond this they are of a more uniform colour, each hair being brown at the base, and gradually shaded into black towards the tip. The ears are small and rounded, and covered with hairs of the same colour as those on the head. The claws are of a large size, and white colour; the toes are united for a considerable portion of their length by the interdigital membrane.

	In.	Lines.		In.	Lines.
Length from nose to root of tail . . . . .	25	0	Length of ear . . . . .	1	0
to base of ear . . . . .	3	6	Height of body at shoulders . . . . .	12	0
of tail (hairs included) . . . . .	19	0			

Habitat, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (*May*.)

“This cat was given me by an old Portuguese priest, who had hunted it down in a thick forest with a small pack of dogs, after a severe chase. It was killed near the Gavia mountain, at the distance of a few miles only from Rio de Janeiro, where it was considered uncommon.” D. Although small, compared with the Puma, (*Felis concolor*, Auct.), this cat, in its slender lengthened body, small head, long tail, and stout limbs, decidedly evinces an affinity to that species. According to the dimensions of the Yagouarundi given by Azara, Desmarest, and Temminck, it appears that the tail is considerably shorter in proportion in the specimens examined by those naturalists, than in the present individual, and the difference was such, as to induce Mr. Martin to believe that the latter was a distinct species; he accordingly proposed for it the specific name of *Darwinii*. At the time that Mr. Martin described the specimen alluded to, I was also inclined to believe it was a distinct species. I mention this because I am afraid my opinion had a slight share in influencing Mr. Martin's determination. I have since seen many specimens, and upon comparing their dimensions, I find that the proportionate length of the tail varies more than is usual in other species of cats, and that the difference in the length in this member is not combined with any other distinguishing character. In colouring there is also a considerable variation, some specimens being almost black, and having the hairs but obscurely annulated with white; in others, the hairs are more distinctly annulated, and the head assumes a grayish hue. Others again, are brown, or black brown,

D